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LETTER DATED 20 AUGUST 1992 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ARMENIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

Upon the instruction of my Government, I would like to inform you of the rapidly deteriorating and dangerous situation in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh and update you on the negotiations concerning the resolution of the conflict. My Government is requesting an urgent meeting of the United Nations Security Council for the purpose of considering specific steps towards stabilizing the situation.

As you may know, intense fighting continues in Nagorno-Karabakh and the border regions of Azerbaijan and Armenia. According to information received today, Azerbaijani forces subjected the civilian population of Goris, the regional capital in southern Armenia, to sustained and intensive shelling from the air and the ground for many hours. During the evening of 12 August and the morning of 13 August, villages in Armenia came under fire from GRAD rocket launchers in Azerbaijan. On 11 August, Azerbaijani military units, supported by tanks, attempted to cross the border for the purpose of occupying the village of Ordzhonikdze, which is inside the territory of the Republic of Armenia. These attacks come just a few days after an Azerbaijani SU-25 military aircraft on 8 August violated Armenian airspace and bombed the village of Kornidzor in Armenia. That same day, military forces also invaded the territory of Armenia and occupied the Armenian village of Artsvashen. These attacks of aggression against Armenia occurred while Azerbaijani artillery continued to shell the civilian population of Stepanakert, the capital city of Nagorno-Karabakh, and the Mardakert district of Nagorno-Karabakh.

The use of SU-25 fighters, representing a new phase in the war being waged by Azerbaijan, is continuing against villages and towns both in Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

As we have previously stated on several occasions, Azerbaijan continues to attempt to directly involve the Republic of Armenia in the conflict by shelling the border regions of Armenia, such as Goris and Krasnoselsk. I respectfully refer you to our past letters to the Security Council dated

9 May, and 22 May, which outline the ongoing concerns of Armenia in this regard.

While negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh have been conducted under the auspices of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) since January 1992, I regretfully report that little progress has been made. The CSCE negotiations have failed to bring about an effective cease-fire agreement. While the Republic of Armenia welcomes the constructive involvement of the CSCE, our Government is concerned at the lack of concrete action to bring peace to the region.

Our Government is now of the belief that without the active involvement of the United Nations in the peace negotiations, concrete progress will not be realized.

On 11 May 1992 I forwarded a letter from the President of Armenia, dated 9 May, requesting an emergency meeting of the Security Council to consider the dispatch of peace-keeping forces to Nagorno-Karabakh and to order such other measures to compel the lifting of the economic blockades, maintain and restore international peace and security and protect human rights as it deems necessary.

Following the Security Council consultation held on 12 May, a statement was issued expressing the concern of the Security Council members about the worsening situation in Nagorno-Karabakh. The Secretary-General authorized the dispatch of a fact-finding mission to the region to study ways and means of assisting the CSCE negotiations and to look into ways the international community could provide prompt humanitarian assistance.

The fact-finding mission went to the region at the end of May and the Security Council held a consultation on 22 June to discuss the report of the mission. At the 22 June consultation, the Security Council members reiterated their support of the CSCE efforts. The Secretary-General decided to send United Nations observers to attend the CSCE negotiations so that the United Nations could aid and support the CSCE in the resolution of this conflict. In addition, the Security Council decided it would study the issue of sending observers to Nagorno-Karabakh.

Unfortunately since that time conditions in Nagorno-Karabakh have deteriorated further. No efforts have been made to find ways for the international community to provide humanitarian assistance or protect human rights in Karabakh. Moreover, although the Secretary-General decided to send observers to attend the CSCE negotiations, they were not informed of the last meeting and therefore were unable to participate. At the last meeting of the CSCE, the CSCE decided to suspend further negotiations until September. The suspension of these talks came at a time of worsening conditions in Nagorno-Karabakh, when a delay in the talks could ill be afforded. Lastly, no concrete action has been taken on the issue of sending observers to Karabakh.

It is our belief that the negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would be substantially aided by the active and direct involvement of the United Nations. As the Republic of Armenia has stated on previous occasions, we firmly believe that peace-keeping forces are necessary to bring about an end to the fighting. We respectfully suggest that a first step could entail United Nations observers being sent to Nagorno-Karabakh to negotiate a lasting cease-fire agreement, which both Armenia and Azerbaijan have indicated they want, and a second step could entail the placement of peace-keeping forces, in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border, while negotiations to resolve the conflict are being conducted. These forces could be sponsored singly or jointly by the United Nations, the CSCE or any other appropriate international organization.

It is of the utmost importance that concrete action to end the violence in Nagorno-Karabakh be taken now. The situation is extremely grave and cannot endure the passage of time without action.

We respectfully request an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the above issues.

I would be grateful if the text of this letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Alexander ARZOUMANIAN
Permanent Representative